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STATE OF THE WEST HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS.

THE old saying that the one half of the world does not know how the other half lives, is not more true in its original meaning with regard to the various grades of people in one place, than it is with reference to the inhabitants of different provinces of the same country. The rural labourers of southern England—the factory people of the west—the Scottish lowland peasantry—are all of them specimens of our general population, marked by broad peculiarities in their character and style of living, but who know little or nothing of each other. It matters not that the external character or designation of the parties be the same. The land-proprietors of Devonshire and the land-proprietors of Orkney are alike to be regarded as land-proprietors, but yet how different are their whole circumstances, and how little are they mutually acquainted! Not only are there varieties in the institutions of different divisions of the empire, and vast differences in the modes of industry and modes of living in each, but, what is less dreamt of, there are sections of the population who, though living in one island, would not understand each other's speech. Different originally in race, and all along different in their moral and physical circumstances, they are so distant from each other in situation, that, even in an age of steamers and railways, they are mutually as much strangers as if they lived in opposite quarters of the globe. While united politically, there could not perhaps be civilised men more various in all respects than are, for instance, the Saxons of Suffolk and the Celts of the Scottish Highlands; and these parties are, in general, as little aware of the peculiar circumstances and characteristics of each other, as are the Fins of the Caffres, or the Peruvians of the Chinese.

We wish to employ this universally diffused sheet as a means of sending abroad over all some knowledge of the present condition of a certain portion of our population. We refer to the inhabitants of a remote and not easily accessible part of Scotland—a district of many romantic features, and generally allowed to be the scene of the half-mythic poems of Ossian—namely, the west of Inverness-shire, Ross-shire, and the adjacent islands. The country of these people is a series of barren mountains and moorlands, fringed here and there by strips of fertile territory, and possessing a great extent of coast—a picturesque but most un-bountiful country, and liable to so much moisture, that every thing like grain culture is almost forbidden. In former ages, the inhabitants of this region were the vassals of a set of chiefs, to whom they owed military service for the means of subsistence. They were the followers of the Lochels and the Clanranalds, who, by their means, shook the throne of the Hanover dynasty in 1745. Since that period, great changes have taken place. A chief of those days, when asked his rental, would answer, "I can bring five hundred men into the field." Now the chiefs are mere proprietors, and the vassals are ordinary cottiers or small farmers, paying a money rent. Religion and education have made some progress, and a few Lowland fashions have been introduced; but, in the main, the people preserve the superstitions, the attachment to chiefs, the language, and all the simplicity of manners appertaining to a former age. One of their most remarkable and most affecting peculiarities is attachment to that very soil which, as we shall show, often denies them bread.

Though nature says as plainly as possible that the country is only fitted for the support of sheep and cattle, it is just possible, in fair seasons, to wring some

cereal crops from the soil. Wheat is out of the question, but oats and barley will grow, and may be reaped, if not previously laid down and ruined by autumn rains. In the old times, there was always a little cultivation for the sake of meal, besides an extensive rearing of cattle. After it ceased to be an object to the proprietors to have large "followings," their obvious policy was to introduce store-farming and diminish the population. Accordingly, during the first thirty years of the reign of George III., there was an extensive emigration to the British possessions in America. Nevertheless, owing to some counter-acting circumstances, the population was not reduced, but rather increased. In the first place, the proprietors were tempted by the government to aid in the wars of the country, by having commissions granted to their younger sons, when they could raise a certain number of recruits. When recruits were raised, it was necessary to settle their relations in small farms, and to promise similar settlements to the men themselves after a certain period of service. Herrings came to the coast for a series of seasons, and led to the establishment of fishing villages. But what chiefly tended to increase the population was the legislative restrictions upon the introduction of foreign barilla, leading to an extensive manufacture of kelp from the sea-weed produced upon the shores. At one time, during the last war, kelp afforded the proprietors a profit of eleven pounds per ton, and two or three of these gentlemen prepared several thousand tons of the article. More enlightened legislation has since taken away this source of employment and of income from the Highlands, leaving nothing to supply its place. The failure of the herring-fishery and the kelp-trade has placed the increased population of these remote districts in a most hapless condition.

Attention was first called to the state of the west Highlanders in 1837, when the failure of a crop had brought an absolute famine upon the district. On that occasion, by dint of great exertion on the part of a few benevolent persons, nearly eighty thousand pounds were raised throughout the country, and spent on provisions for the support of these poor people. But while the temporary exigency was thus got over, the generally low condition, if not habitual misery, of the great bulk of them, has demanded further consideration; and a committee of the House of Commons has sat in the spring of this year to collect evidence on the subject, with a view to considering the propriety of bestowing public aid towards the removal of a portion of the surplus population to the colonies. The picture afforded by this evidence of the state of these people, is one which must greatly affect every humane mind. In consequence of the encouraging circumstances which formerly existed, the little holdings or farms are in a vast number of instances subdivided into still smaller farms, each being the residence of a family. In one estate, there are 1108 crofters or cottiers, paying a rent of £5200 a-year, being an average rent of £4. 14s. 5d. each. But parts of these crofts are almost invariably allotted to other families, generally sons and other relations of the ostensible tenant. Almost every little holding has two, three, or even four, families upon it. Assuming that each croft in the above instance has two families, and that the families average five in number, we have a population of 8310 upon land rented at £5200, which gives a rental of only 12s. 7d. to each individual. The population in this instance is, we need scarcely be told, "wretchedly poor." In another instance, an estate with the ascertained population of 2237, has a rental which assigns 13s. 3d. to each individual. This state of matters applies to several districts. The po-

pulation of the island of Skye, and that range of islands known as "The Long Island," is, according to the census of 1831, no less than 55,000, while the gross rental of these districts is only £42,000, which gives a rental of only 15s. 3d. to each individual.* The bulk of this miserable tenantry live upon potatoes. They get even meal "very rarely," and "they do not taste butcher meat from the beginning to the end of the year." Last year, in Skye, the crops were cut green; the potatoes in many places failed; and, owing to the rains, the poor people could not secure their usual supply of peats, so that, where they have potatoes, they perhaps lack the fuel to boil them. The only resource in these cases is in the shell-fish which they find amongst the rocks after the recess of the tide. Living upon such fare, in small stifling bothies or huts, the picture of Caledonian misery drawn by the English satirist appears realised; but not with "a disdainful smile" can such things now be heard of. Humanity must every where melt to think of any portion of our population, more particularly a simple, virtuous, and innocent race, exposed to privations so extreme, at once patient under them and unable of themselves to escape from them.

It is of course to be readily acknowledged that a great error has been committed, in allowing so large a surplus population to come into existence. It has not been, however, the fault of any particular parties. The nation may be considered chargeable with the error of the kelp manufacture—a manufacture which never should have existed, while it was possible to procure the article so much cheaper elsewhere. So is it with the want of a proper poor-law, enforcing upon the rich the duty of attending to the poor, and preventing the people from sinking into the low condition wherein considerations of prudence are lost sight of by individuals. True knowledge on these points has only arisen of late years, after considerable evil had occurred: it is therefore necessary to remedy the past, before we think of making right arrangements for the future. So little, we may add, were the principles here adverted to understood forty years ago, that, at that time, bounties were all but directly put upon families of a certain number of children, and emigration was stopped by act of parliament. The landlords profited in some instances by the multitude of the people; but it was also useful to the state. At one time a full fifth of the men of this district capable of bearing arms, did bear arms in their country's service; and the plains of Maida, Albuera, Vittoria, and Waterloo, were witness to their headlong, yet conscientious valour.

When we think, on the one hand, of the poor soil and climate of the Highlands, with an excessive and starving population, and on the other of the wide-spread and rich lands of Canada and Australia, as yet bearing only a few scattered settlers, the idea of transferring the surplus people to the superior and unoccupied country at once occurs. Emigration has long been practised in the Highlands, and there are whole tracts in the nearer colonies almost exclusively peopled by the descendants of the Gael. What should prevent an effort being now made to effect the transfer of such an amount of the people of the distressed districts, as would leave the rest in comparative comfort? From the partial measures of this kind already taken, the best results have followed. We shall relate a few particulars.

In 1837, the government took measures for deporting a part of the suffering population of the Western

* This particular fact we have from a private, but perfectly trustworthy source.

Highlands, and about 3000 were shipped to Australia, and soon afterwards several hundreds emigrated to the British possessions in North America. The emigrants to Australia were carried out at the expense of an emigration fund connected with that colony, since stated to be exhausted. A large proportion of the emigrants to Australia, on arriving, were settled on farms belonging to wealthy colonists, on the proviso of giving labour as rent. These people already describe themselves in their letters as in circumstances of the greatest comfort. They have been promoted from almost the lowest condition in which human beings can exist, to the situation of comfortable small farmers. Those who went to the North American colonies give scarcely less pleasing accounts of the change of their condition. We must here introduce a little anecdote.

When the government agent was superintending the operations for emigration in Skye in 1837, there was, amongst those applying to be sent out, an oldish-looking man, whom we shall distinguish by his first name only, though that was one which may be said to be no distinction in the Scottish Highlands. The respectable agent thought Donald too old to be entitled to the government bounty, and the poor fellow was thrown into despair. In this exigency, he applied to his landlord's agent, who had come to aid in the arrangements, and who, fortunately for him, was a man of great benevolence. Mr — represented his case to the government agent, but found that gentleman under a conviction that Donald was a lazy old fellow, not at all fit to be sent out. Strangers are apt thus to form an unfavourable opinion of the activity of the Highlanders, from seeing them so generally unoccupied, though it is known to all who are better acquainted with them, that, when supplied with employment which they are sure is to be remunerative, they work as actively as any people on earth. Mr — next day had Donald closely shaved, by which he sunk at once ten years in apparent age, and for the whole of that day and the next he kept him constantly trotting about on some little duties. The agent then changed his opinion, and was inclined to receive the poor man and his family. The difficulty then was to get clothes for the voyage. The whole of his means being exhausted in furnishings for his wife and children, he had not a penny to get a suit for himself. His kind-hearted friend relieved him by rendering up a suit he himself wore, and Donald was thus enabled to proceed to Australia. Landing there, he and some thirty of his friends resolved to keep together, and they were all planted on the large farm of Dr Lang's brother, on the Hunter River. According to the last accounts, this man, who in Skye was a mere incumbrance to the soil, possessed twenty fertile acres, 15 of which he had under a crop of Indian corn: he was, in short, a comfortable small farmer.

The surplus population of the district under notice—that portion of it whose removal is necessary to enable the remainder to live in comparative comfort—is estimated at 44,600. On the other hand, Dr Rolph and Mr Justice Hagerman, two Canadians of high character, state in their evidence that Canada could, with the greatest ease, receive and furnish immediate employment and subsistence to 10,000 emigrés per annum, provided they arrive at the beginning of the busy season. Such being the case, the only question that remains is, how are the means to be provided for carrying out the surplus population? To remove a large number, it is calculated that L.4. 1s. 7d. is necessary if they are to land at Quebec, Cape Breton, or Prince Edward Island, and L.5. 11s. 7d. if they are to be carried to Upper Canada; the above sums including 20s. a-head for clothing and blankets. The former colonies, it may be mentioned, are those which the Highlanders prefer to all others, as their friends are already there in great numbers. For the necessary funds, three sources are pointed out—emigration bounties from the colonies, the purses of the Highland proprietors, and the government. The aid contributed by the last might be in the form of transports.

That the colonists have a direct interest in promoting the immigration of labourers is obvious, and we apprehend that little difficulty would be experienced in inducing them to contribute their share to this good work. The public of this country has a less direct interest, though the claim on its humanity is certainly strong; and it might even be shown that, by converting some thousands of paupers into comfortable independent colonists, able and willing to be good customers for our goods, a small expenditure would be in the long run amply repaid. As to the Highland proprietors, there will be no want of will to contribute, but, in some instances, a sad lack of means. Many of the estates belong to men deeply embarrassed, or are "under trust." It will not be easy in those instances to obtain proper contributions. Yet so much good will has been shown by the class in general towards this and all other philanthropic undertakings in behalf of the poor tenantry, that we must not despair. On this subject some unjust views and statements have gone abroad; and it has even been said, why should not the proprietors bear the whole burden of the surplus population? In the first place, the latter proposal is not fair, as they have not been the sole causes of the surplus population. How would the wealthy manufacturers of Glasgow receive a proposal that they should be at the whole expense of deporting the ten thousand miseries who litter in

their "wynds," a hot-bed of fever! The one proposal would be as fair and reasonable as the other. With regard to the sacrifices already made by the proprietors for their tenantry, they have in reality been very great. Not only do these gentlemen not seek to thin their lands as the law would allow, not only do they pass from great arrears of rent, but they are constantly disbursing for the benefit of their people, albeit that many of them are mere squatters or intruders. It is stated in evidence that Lord Macdonald sent food and other supplies, to the value of L.2000, to the people on his lands in 1837, and that many other proprietors came forward in a most liberal manner. The proprietors proposed on that occasion to take the whole duty upon them of succouring the starving thousands, and only consented to appeal to the public when they found the evil to be far beyond their means. The strongest evidence is given as to their liberality in providing for the religious and educational wants of the people. The Duke of Argyll has 400 families on his property in the island of Tyree, paying no rent of any kind. Instead of doing little for their people, it would perhaps be difficult to show any set of capitalists in our community, who are content to want the use or benefit of so much of it, or make so many positive sacrifices of it, merely to fulfil the demands of humane feeling. Dr Macleod states, with regard to these people of Tyree, that, to his certain knowledge, the late Duke of Argyll shed tears over their distress. He said, "These people wish to remain; they are devotedly attached to that island, and I cannot think of removing them: they were my fencible men, and I love them."

At this stage of proceedings, we can only express our hope that all the parties here spoken of as interested in the removal of the surplus population will meet the object in a conceding spirit, and seek in union to accomplish it on the scale and with the spirit and vigour which alone can avail. When the population, however, is reduced to its proper level, equally vigorous measures must be taken to prevent the recurrence of the same evil. Amongst these we most decidedly include a poor-law, giving the proprietors every where a direct interest in keeping up the people at that point of comfort which is their best preservative against becoming abject, dependent, and excessive in numbers.*

THE MID-DAY SIGNAL OF THE PALAIS-ROYAL.

A SHORT time since, on a fine spring morning, illuminated by the richest rays of the sun, a troop of vagabond boys were playing about the gardens of the Palais-Royal. Hanging in clusters upon the iron railings which encircle these gardens, the band in question occupied themselves busily in throwing stones among the flowers, aiming at the sparrows, and watching fit opportunities to play other malignant tricks, whenever the backs of the guardians of the place were turned away. In such circumstances, the young rascals of Paris are most ingenious and inventive. So was it shown on the present occasion.

The leader of the youthful band, seizing a favourable moment when no one could perceive him, adroitly scaled the balustrade of the Palais gardens, and crept along the grass, on all-fours, towards the spot where stood the mid-day cannon, which is cleverly made to announce the hour of noon by its discharge through the medium of the sun's meridional rays. When the intruder reached the spot, the hour was exactly half-past eleven. But this did not deter the tricky youngster. He had with him a lucifer match; in an instant it was kindled and applied to the cannon, which accordingly made its official detonation, announcing prematurely the hour of noon.

Immediately afterwards, in all the streets, shops, and coffee-houses of the city, men might have been seen to pull out their watches, in order to test the exactness of these articles by the infallible report. A general movement of surprise was the consequence, and a great variety of reflections came from the lips of the Parisians within hearing. "Singular!" cried one; "I have always found this watch of mine to go well." "What!" exclaimed another, "a full half hour behind! And this is the watch which was guaranteed to me to go without varying a minute in a month!" "This is the first time," muttered a third, "that my Breguet ever went wrong!"

The watchmakers were still more astonished than other people; but the majority of them were compelled to yield to the evidence of the official detonation. A few did stand out for their chronometers; and one of these paladins of watch-making ventured upon the daring suggestion, that "the sun might have gone wrong!" But, as may be imagined, this ingenious idea did not find many supporters. The infallibility of the god of day was not a thing to be generally questioned; and, accordingly, almost all who were within hearing of the cannon of the Palais-Royal, whether followers of the art of horology or simple amateurs, took their watch-keys, and set their watches

to the hour of noon, or, in other words, half an hour in advance of the real time. The evidence of all the clocks of Paris could not stand against the fiat of the sun.

On first consideration, one might not be able to foresee any great mischief likely to result from this mischievous trick of the boy with his match. Grave consequences, nevertheless, were the result. To make a mistake of half an hour in the progress of time, is not an error to be committed with impunity. A watch that goes too quick or too slow will often originate a series of mistakes of the most serious kind, from the consequences of which it may be very difficult to escape.

"Already noon! Boy, my bill!" These words were uttered, on the morning here referred to, by a gentleman who had breakfasted at Vefour's, and who, after his meal, had fallen into a long and thoughtful reverie. This gentleman was Monsieur D—, the banker, whose affairs had long appeared to be in a flourishing state, but who had lately sustained some pecuniary reverses, which his credit found it difficult to conceal much longer. When the young rascal's lucifer had done the duty of the meridional sun, M. D— started up in haste, and left the restaurateur's. He had in his hands at the moment a letter, which he re-read, as he hurried along. It was conceived in the following terms:—

"I have received, my dear friend, the letter in which you communicate to me the disastrous position of your affairs, and tell me that you have no remaining hope but in me. My own resources are insufficient, as you well know, to enable me to relieve you, but I am about to set out, as you suggest, to the country, though with little hope, I confess. Nevertheless, it is possible that the application may be successful, and you may rest assured that I shall spare no pains to make it so. If I succeed in realising the sum necessary for your preservation, I will meet you to-morrow in the Orleans Gallery, within the hours of twelve and one, pointedly. You will be punctual, of course, in meeting me. I do not propose to meet you at your own house, because the precariousness of your present condition may render you afraid of receiving embarrassing visits there. If I am not at the appointed place exactly within the hour, you may be assured that I have failed; and I should advise you in that case to lose no time in accomplishing your project of quitting Paris. Your creditors will then see more strongly the necessity of arrangement, that they may have your personal aid in making your assets available. You may readily guess my reason for not wishing to come in person and tell you of my having failed to procure funds. My uncle, to whom you stand so heavily indebted, would never pardon me if he thought that I had aided you in your flight. Be punctual. Yours ever, &c. Lucien B—."

M. D— reached the Orleans Gallery, and walked up and down in a state of great anxiety. "The crisis of my fate has arrived," thought he; "I am rapidly hurrying down the slope to ruin, and have only increased my danger tenfold, by endeavouring to conceal my situation while there was yet time for an honourable submission. Every hope is failing me. Lucien is the last; and if he brings not the hundred thousand francs which I must pay this day, my fate is sealed."

Agitated by such harassing reflections, the banker looked again and again at his watch, as he paced the gallery. He had set the watch by the unlucky report of the Palais-Royal, happy at the time, poor man, that he had such an assurance of chronological accuracy. The moments passed away. No appearance of Lucien. Every minute destroyed a portion of hope, and when the unfortunate banker's watch at last told the hour of one, a cold sweat broke out on his temples. "He comes not," muttered M. D—; "all is over." Yet he lingered on still. Again and again he trod the gallery, scanning anxiously every outlet and inlet. It was only when the watch told him that the stated hour, and twenty-five minutes more, had passed away, that he saw the necessity of acting decidedly, and hurried with speed from the gallery.

At that very moment, Lucien entered the same place by another entrance. He was still five minutes before the expiry of the hour, that is to say, it wanted five minutes of one o'clock—the banker's watch, set by the cannon-report, having been wrong by precisely half an hour. While Lucien walked about the gallery, with the required sum of one hundred thousand francs in his hands, wondering what could possibly be the cause of his friend's absence, that friend was flying at speed from Paris, in a carriage which had been in readiness for the purpose. He was flying into acknowledged bankruptcy. Lucien, meanwhile, could not but conclude that some new evil had occurred to render his friend's affairs irretrievable. How could Lucien possibly conjecture what had been the influence of a lucifer match in the hands of a mischievous boy!

That little ragged rascal of the streets had caused an important bankruptcy—in fact, a pretty serious commercial crisis.

At the same period of time when these affairs were in progress, a young lady, elegantly attired, might have been seen in the passage Delorme. She was walking about with steps somewhat hurried and impatient; and an attentive observer might have remarked upon her countenance an expression of angry surprise. Nay, she might have been heard to mutter

* In the compilation of this paper we have been chiefly instructed by a report of the evidence taken before the parliamentary committee, ordered to be printed March 26, 1841. The principal witnesses are Mr Bowie, W.S., Edinburgh, and the Rev. Dr Macleod of Glasgow, two men peculiarly well acquainted with the state of the Highlands.

pretty loudly, and very peevishly, "It is scandalous! My watch must be right!"—and here she looked at it for the tenth time—"My watch must be right; but a few minutes have passed since I got it out of the hands of my watchmaker in the Palais-Royal. It cannot be wrong already, and Monsieur Leopold chooses to be behind his time! After my condescending, too, to listen to his humble petition that I would go to the museum with him, and going out of my way, besides, to meet him here! Scandalous!"

The surprise, impatience, and anger of the lady increased every moment—and no wonder that it was so. Young, pretty, rich, and surrounded by admirers, the widowed Madame de Luceval had distinguished in the crowd of her suitors M. Leopold de Versy. She had even given him fair grounds to hope, that ere long she would consent to resume for his sake the chains of matrimony; and, by the way, she had agreed to take his arm to visit the Museum of the Louvre—an honour envied by many and accepted by him with gratitude; yet the hour had seemingly come, the lady was in waiting, and the gentleman was not there! "I expected to find him before me," continued the irritated lady, in her meditative mood, "but I was in error. It was a piece of presumption on my part. M. Leopold does not plume himself on punctuality. If I am to wait thus upon him before marriage, what will be my condition afterwards! Shall I re-marry only to taste again of evils which I have already felt in this bitterness?" These murmured meditations boded no good to the unfortunate but innocent M. Leopold de Versy. The fair widow looked at her watch for the last of many times. Ten minutes past one was the hour indicated. "My patience is at an end," said the beautiful widow; "the most rigorous politeness accords but a few minutes on occasions of appointments; but where one ought reasonably to expect to be eagerly waited for, this conduct on the part of M. Leopold is somewhat too bad." And the beautiful widow waited no longer, but walked away.

M. Leopold de Versy arrived at the appointed spot, on the wings of love, full ten minutes before the time agreed upon. He of course received a disappointment, nor would the lady afterwards either give or take explanations. The match between the pair was broken off decisively, and the lady sought, and soon afterwards found, a gentleman of whose punctuality she took care to be well assured.

Behold, then, what mighty consequences may flow from a little gunpowder, ignited too soon! Not on the field of battle, and between two powerful armies—for there great consequences might be expected—but in the gardens of the Palais-Royal, from the premature discharge of a single harmless little cannon, through the agency of a lucifer match, in the hands of a little mischievous boy!

Doubtless, other results, equally serious, flowed from the same event; but we can carry the inquiry no farther.*

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCHES.

LETITIA ELIZA LONDON.

THERE is something of natural and pleasing gallantry in the enthusiasm with which the critical portion of the world, usually of the masculine species, receives an accession to the literary phalanx in the form of a young and beautiful woman. The entrance into the walks of poetry of Miss Landon, latterly Mrs Maclean, and better known by the initials L. E. L. than by either of these names, was an instance in which such enthusiasm was displayed. Miss Landon, of whom a memoir has just appeared from the pen of Mr Laman Blanchard,† was the eldest of the three children of Mr John Landon, partner in an army-agency house in London, and son of the Rev. John Landon, rector of Tedstone in Herefordshire. She was born at Hans-place, Chelsea, August 14, 1802, and at or near that spot she passed the greater part of her days. In childhood, she exhibited great quickness of talents. An invalid friend used to cast down the letters of the alphabet, in card, on the floor, and reward the child as she assorted them well or ill, according to instructions. Rarely did she fail to secure some of these certificates of merit, and not less sure was she to show the liberality of her disposition by immediately sharing what she had obtained with her little brother and playmate.

Miss Landon was sent, in her sixth year, to be regularly taught at a school in Chelsea, where Miss Mitford and Lady Caroline Lamb had been taught before her. Here "the clever little child," as she was called, was chid but for one fault, and that a most characteristic one—she would never walk quietly in the ranks with the other children. Soon after, she became the pupil of a cousin at Trevor Park, East Barnet, to which the family had removed for a time. Liveliness alike of talent and temper, chiefly marked these early years. We have a delightful picture of the child of genius in a letter of her preceptor. "In very many instances," says this lady, "in endeavouring to teach, I have myself been taught, the extraordinary memory and genius of the learner soon leaving the humble abilities of the teacher far behind. Any experienced person used to instruction would have

smiled at hearing us. When I asked Letitia any question relating either to history, geography, grammar—to Plutarch's Lives, or to any book we had been reading—I was pretty certain her answers would be perfectly correct; still, not exactly recollecting, and unwilling she should find out just then that I was less learned than herself, I used thus to question her. 'Are you quite certain?' 'Oh yes, quite!' 'You feel sure you are correct?' 'Yes, very sure.' 'Well, then, to be perfectly right, bring the book and let us look over it again.' I never knew her to be wrong."

At so early an age as this, she would occupy an hour or two of the evening amusing her father and mother with accounts of the wonderful castles she had built in her imagination; and when rambling in the garden in fair weather, she had taken with her, as a companion, a long stick, which she called her measuring-stick; if she was asked, 'What that was for?' her answer would be, 'Oh, don't speak to me—I have such a delightful thought in my head.' And on she would go talking to herself. There was a little world of happiness within her; and even then, the genius afterwards developed was constantly struggling to break forth."

An all-devouring appetite for books—that unflinching mark of active and superior intellect—distinguished her at this period. A hundred and fifty volumes of poets and novelists in Cooke's editions, were but a clandestine indulgence in the midst of the more solid reading permitted to her. Plutarch was a great favourite with her, and she was particularly struck by the hardy self-denying character of the Lacedæmonian heroes, as contrasted with the opposite character of the Sybarites. Her greatest reproach to her brother at any time was to call him a Sybarite. The two playmates, being angry on one occasion with the gardener, adopted an antique mode of revenge, by shooting at him with arrows. As they had headed these weapons with nails, to make them *scar-aroos*, the gardener found this attack no joke, and rushing forwards, with his spade before his face, he captured the two assailants, and set them on the top of a quick-set hedge, by way of penance. They cried for a time, being totally unable to get down; and the brother, after attaining some degree of composure, asked his sister if she had ever heard of Spartans being so served. "The idea instantly converted her tears to laughter, and she said, 'Very like Spartans, indeed!'" In about half an hour the gardener relieved them, on promises of future amendment.

Miss Landon, on emerging from childhood, soon showed in what direction the energies of her active mind were to be permanently turned. "The days of tasks and lessons over, her studies took their own turn, and the tastes she displayed were those of the poetry and the romance that coloured all her visions, waking or asleep. Pen and ink had succeeded to the slate, writing to scribbling, distinct images to phantasies that had as little form as substance; and it followed that ideas of publication, and a thirst for fame, should succeed to the first natural charm of parental kisses and family pats on the head—the delicious encouragement of an occasional 'not so bad!' or even a 'very clever, indeed!' from some more enthusiastic patron. The desire was soon gratified." Mr Jordan, editor of *The Literary Gazette*, a periodical just established, was shown some of the fragments of romance and snatches of song which the young lady had composed, and gave a most favourable opinion of them. Thus encouraged, Miss Landon wrote a romantic poetical tale of some length, entitled the "Fate of Adelaide," and published it in 1820. Immediately after the issue of this volume, the authoress began that series of contributions to *The Literary Gazette*, under the signature of L. E. L., which first established her reputation as a poet. Week after week she poured forth pieces so far surpassing the common run of journal poetry, and indicating so much fertility of fancy, that general curiosity was excited respecting the writer. When, in answer to repeated queries, the editor of the *Gazette* announced L. E. L. to be "a young lady still in her teens," the favour of the world was any thing but withdrawn or diminished. The poetry which she produced at this time, and indeed the whole of her poetical compositions, presented almost always a pensive or gloomy tinge, though the temperament of the writer, excepting under peculiar circumstances, was the reverse of pensive or gloomy. Her wailings and sorrows were for the most part entirely imaginary. Nothing can exhibit this fact more strikingly than a letter from Miss Landon to her mother, in the memoir before us. "I like my aunt more and more," says she. "Nothing can be pleasanter than my visit to Castle End, and I only wish you were in as agreeable a place." After some other lively observations, she bids her friends write, as "a letter is delightful—it makes me quite happy for three days." She then encloses a piece of poetry "written last night," in which such lines as the following occur:—

"When I remember I am quite alone,
That all I loved most fondly—all are gone.
To you that deepest sorrow is unknown,
But cold to me that smile that meets my own."

It is comforting to think that the numberless "Fare-thee-wells," which Miss Landon poured forth during her poetical career, were not founded upon real parting sorrows; but, at the same time, it forces almost unpleasantly upon one a conviction of the fictitiousness of almost all poetical feeling.

We are lingering too long, however, upon the beginning of Miss Landon's career. Living with her father, and afterwards with her brother, the Rev. W. H. Landon, she continued to pour forth verse in an abundance certainly extraordinary, though no doubt hurtful to her permanent fame. In addition to a multitude of small pieces, she produced, in 1824, the poem called the "Improvisatrice," one of great beauty and interest. No subject could have been more congenial to the mind of L. E. L., for she herself may be said to have improvised almost the whole of her poetry. The faults of the poem were those arising from her "fatal facility," and from youth and inexperience. The "Troubadour," published in 1825, was marked by the like features, but, on the whole, it confirmed and increased her celebrity, which was now such that her society and acquaintance were very generally courted, not only by the ordinary people of the world, but by her contemporaries in literature, and especially those of her own sex, Mrs Hemans, Miss Mitford, Miss Jewsbury, and many others.

The "Golden Violet, with Tales of Chivalry and Romance," was a new work, containing some of Miss Landon's best effusions, and proving the perfecting effect of time and practice on her style. "The Venetian Bracelet, the Lost Pleiad," &c., followed in 1829; and in 1831, she produced her first prose work of consequence, "Romance and Reality." In the two or three years immediately succeeding, "Francesca Carrara," "Ethel Churchill," and a volume of prose stories for the young, were given to the public, confirming the high promise of her first novel. All the while, periodicals and annuals, almost without number, were receiving contributions from her, and, in some instances, were indebted to her for editorial care and superintendence.

The account which we have from Mr Blanchard of Miss Landon's personal appearance and deportment about 1830, will be read with interest. It may be premised that she was then living, and had for several years lived, as a boarder in the house of Misses Lance, Hans Place:—"Nobody who might happen to see her for the first time about this period, enjoying the little quiet dance (of which she was fond), or the snug corner of the room where the little lively discussion (which she liked still better), was going on, could possibly have traced in her one feature of the sentimental which popular error reputed her to be. The listener might only hear her running on from subject to subject, and lighting up each with a wit never ill-natured, and often brilliant—scattering quotations as thick as hail—opinions as wild as the winds—defying fair argument to keep pace with her, and fairly talking herself out of breath. He would most probably hear from her lips many a pointed and sparkling aphorism, the wittiest things of the night, let who might be around her—he would be surprised, pleased, but his heroine of song, as painted by anticipation, he would be unable to discover. He would see her looking younger than she really was; and perhaps struck by her animated air, her expressive face, and her slight but elegant figure, his impression would at once find utterance in the exclamation which, a year or two afterwards, escaped from the lips of the Ettrick Shepherd, on being first presented to her whose romantic fancies had often charmed him in the wild mountains—'Hey! but I didna think ye'd been sae bonnie!'—staring at the same time with all a poet's capacity of eye. Without attempting an elaborate description of the personal appearance of L. E. L., we cite this expression of surprise as some indication that she was far prettier than report allowed her to be, at the period we are speaking of; and never, perhaps, did she look better than about this time. Her easy carriage and careless movements would seem to imply an insensibility to the feminine passion for dress; yet she had a proper sense of it, and never disdained the foreign aid of ornament, always provided it was simple, quiet, and becoming. Her hair was 'darkly-brown,' very soft and beautiful, and always tastefully arranged; her figure, as before remarked, slight, but well formed and graceful; her feet small, but her hands especially so, and faultlessly white and finely shaped; her fingers were fairy fingers; her ears, also, were observably little. Her face, though not regular in 'every feature,' became beautiful by expression: every flash of thought, every change and colour of feeling, lightened over it as she spoke, when she spoke earnestly. The forehead was not high, but broad and full; the eyes had no overpowering brilliancy, but their clear intellectual light penetrated by its exquisite softness; her mouth was not less marked by character, and, besides the glorious faculty of uttering the pearls and diamonds of fancy and wit, knew how to express scorn, or anger, or pride, as well as it knew how to smile willingly, or to pour forth those short, quick, ringing laughs, which, not excepting even her *bon mots* and aphorisms, were the most delightful things that issued from it. To judge of her powers of conversation, it is necessary to consider, not only the qualities already referred to, but her extraordinary memory, and the stores of information and anecdote which an unwearied and diversified course of reading, during many years, had placed at her command. She had, in truth, been an indefatigable reader; and while triflers in society listened, expecting that her talk would be of moonlight and roses, they were often surprised to hear her—unless mirth happened to be her object, and satire or mystification her choice—dis-

* We have translated the above from the French of Eugene Guinet.

† Life and Literary Remains of L. E. L.; by Laman Blanchard. 2 vols. London: Colburn. 1841.

cussing the character of a distant age, or the rise of a great nation; the influence of a mighty genius upon his contemporaries; the value of a creed outworn; or some historical event, a judgment of which demanded—what she would not fail to exhibit if she spoke at all—an insight into the actors, the policy, and the manners of the time, to which it related." It seems to have been partly in consequence of her uncommon frankness of manners, but greatly also through causeless malice in some obscure parties, that Miss Landon's fair fame was for a while clouded by a disgraceful scandal, which, being utterly exploded in these volumes, we shall not further allude to.

There has been much affected talk about the circumstances in which various poets have composed, or might be supposed to have composed, their stanzas. Such persons might be expected to imagine L. E. L. penning her elegantly pensive measures in a beautiful bower, amidst the glories of an autumn sunset, with a silver rill trickling near. How surprised must they be to learn that she usually wrote in a plain back bedroom, on an old desk not the least interesting in appearance! Of her literary habits Mr Blanchard gives some account as follows:—"Writing verses was to her but a labour of love, if labour in any sense it could be called; it was far less irksome to her to compose a poem than to sit idle; and, as she rarely looked about for choice subjects, but seized on those that first occurred to her, she never waited for the 'poetic fit,' the 'happy moment,' but sat down to her desk in any mood, careless or solemn. Thus it is not surprising that she was continually repeating herself in stanzas on memory and hope, and love and disappointment; nor is it strange, considering the activity, or rather the restlessness, of her imagination, if the volumes which, up to this time, we have seen published in her name, formed but an inconsiderable portion of what she actually wrote. To *The Literary Gazette* she still continued a frequent contributor of poetical fragments; but her writings were far from being confined to those columns in which the initials of the poet were regularly sought. In the lighter departments of criticism, she was, week by week, a devoted labourer; and many are the authors, young and old, poets, novelists, dramatists, travellers, and reminiscence-mongers, who owe the first generous words of encouragement, or the cordial renewal of former welcomes, to her glowing and versatile pen. Written generally to suit the occasion merely, it is not thought worth while to make reference to these criticisms in detail; but it is due to L. E. L. to say, that, were her opinions upon books and authors, whether expressed in this or any other publication, impartially extracted, and collected in volumes, there would be seen in them the results of great miscellaneous reading, research in more than one foreign language, acuteness and brilliancy of remark—with, it is true, much hastiness of judgment, many prejudiced and inconclusive views, frequent wildness of assertion—but without one ungenerous or vindictive sentiment, one trace of an unkindly or interested feeling. She has often gone far out of her way to recommend to the public the productions of rivals who abused her; and assuredly, towards those by whom she conceived herself obliged, though in the slightest degree, she was ever ready to play the friend where she should have been the critic only, and to repay with a column of praise the favour of a kind word; for the smallest service she always remembered and always over-rated. But here her sinings against 'impartial judgment' end. Her failings as a critic leaned to virtue's side; and the young writer, with but a spark of the poetic fire in his lines, was as sure of a gentle sentence of appreciation and sympathy, as the established favourite was of a grateful welcome and an honouring tribute."

In 1836, Miss Landon formed an acquaintance with Mr George Maclean, nephew of Lieutenant-General Sir John Maclean, and governor of the Sierra Leone colony. Her friends were somewhat surprised by her decision on this occasion, chiefly as Mr Maclean was bound to return without delay to the African coast, so fatal to Europeans. However, on the 7th of June 1838, the marriage took place, Sir E. Lytton Bulwer, her attached friend, giving away the bride. Although, for some years previously, the poetess had enjoyed but partial health, she left England, immediately after her nuptials, in good health and spirits, designing to continue her literary labours in her new situation, while her husband might be occupied with his official duties.

She arrived at Cape Coast Castle in safety, but was soon involved in considerable troubles, partly arising from the want of proper servants, and partly from an illness with which her husband was seized, and during which he required her own close attendance. Nevertheless, her letters to her friends in England spoke the language of cheerfulness and hope, and she described her husband as beloved both by herself and all around them. Suddenly, these friends, and all who took an interest in her, were astounded by the intelligence of her sudden death. On the morning of the 15th October, she had complained of spasms and a sense of weariness, and, after giving an early meal to her sick husband, retired to her own room. She was there soon after found expiring, with an empty phial of prussic acid in her hand. After all the evidence we have seen adduced on the case, we can only deem it most probable that the unfortunate poetess incautiously took an over-large dose of a dangerous medi-

cine, and perished in consequence. Being at the time engaged in her usual literary tasks, on perfectly good terms with her husband, and in the enjoyment of most of the advantages which make life precious, the idea of a voluntary death seems, notwithstanding some circumstances not easily to be accounted for, inadmissible.

On the last page of this number of the Journal, will be found a specimen of the beautiful series of poems, published in the second of Mr Blanchard's volumes.

VISIT TO LINCOLN.

SECOND AND CONCLUDING PAPER.

THE Close is an irregular space surrounding the cathedral, and enclosed by a range of plain domestic buildings, generally of brick, and most of them very old, being the residences of the clergy attached to the establishment. One of these was pointed out to me as the house which Dr Paley had occupied for a considerable series of years, in his capacity of Sub-dean of Lincoln, and where he had written some of his well-known works. I was much surprised at the anecdotes which I heard at Lincoln, in which the voice and manner of this eminent person were imitated. With all his powerful intellect, and the education which schools, tutors, and society, must have imposed upon him, he seems to have continued to the last to speak the broad patois of the district of Yorkshire of which he was a native, and to have been, even in the style of his ideas, much more homely than could well be imagined of a man of his rank. His uncompromising plainness of speech is said to have proved a frequent source of annoyance to his more refined brethren. The anecdotes I heard of him reminded me much of those told of some of the rough old Scotch judges of the latter part of the last century.

Near the Close, a little way down the slope towards the south, are the ruins of the Bishop's Palace, presenting little besides the remains of a hall of august proportions, in which James I. was once entertained, and some traces of a kitchen, whose huge fireplaces and wide chimneys speak strongly for the redundant hospitality of old times. Throughout the Close, and the adjacent courts and lanes, one sees many bits of curious old architecture—mullioned windows, projecting chimneys, tablets of coats armorial, &c.—mixed up with more modern masonry. There are also remains of a precinct wall of a fortified character, which had once protected the cathedral and its dependencies. Throughout all these places there reigns a solemn quiet, peculiar in England to the vicinage of cathedrals, and which scarcely appears compatible with ordinary domestic life—as if the hearts of human beings were here stilled into a condition almost vegetative, or which at least was utterly exclusive of all strong emotion. Education and refined manners, connected with moderate income, and sequestered from all the stimuli of ambition, produce in such scenes a "society" strikingly peculiar, but which must be, to those whose minds are attuned to it, by no means disagreeable. It includes no excitement, much small placid enjoyment, many minute and nice observances, and perhaps makes the nearest approach which our country now any where presents, to the serene and meditative life preached up by the poets. In Lincoln, this society has a local habitation which serves to keep up its distinction from the bulk of the community. It resides entirely on the high ground connected with the cathedral, while the trading classes generally occupy the slope and the valley. Hence there is a divarication of Lincoln society into *up-hill people* and *down-hill people*, and between these, at one time, no social intercourse took place. There is now a somewhat different state of things. The educated and respectable of all classes mix more together than they did, and "up-hill" and "down-hill" are becoming, as they ought to be, only local distinctions. Even as it is, what a curious contrast is presented in such an old punctilious place, to the hearty fusion of all the social elements which takes place in new communities. But human nature can be adapted to an infinite variety of circumstances, and though, between the dainty civilities of a university or cathedral town and the rough good fellowship of a Port Nicholson, the space appears immense, yet happiness is fortunately a plant that will flourish in all possible conditions.

Most readers will probably be surprised to learn that one of the Roman gates of Lincoln still exists. It is called the Newport gate, and still gives admission to the city from the north. The road which enters by it (that from Hull) is also of Roman origin, and for eleven or twelve miles is as straight as an arrow. The gateway has a rude appearance, being composed of large coarse uncemented stones, while fully eleven feet of its height is sunk below the present level of the street. There is one smaller arch at the east side, while another of the same character on the other side is concealed by an adjoining house. This must certainly be ranked as among the most interesting remains of a remote antiquity in England.

The shell of the Conqueror's castle still exists towards the west of the cathedral. A huge wall, enclosing probably three acres, still exists in a tolerably entire state, together with the basis of the great round tower or keep. Within the area enclosed by the wall, an elegant court-room for the assizes and a county jail have been erected, without occupying a very large proportion of the ground, much of which is used as a garden.

Farther to the westward, and also cresting the same slope which has been so often alluded to, is the Lunatic Asylum—a modern establishment of which I had heard a good deal, in consequence of its being the first in which personal restraint had been disused. It is a handsome modern building, surrounded by a wide area, laid out as airing courts, or as pleasure-grounds, from the latter of which a fine view is commanded. On applying for admission to see the asylum, I learned that Mr Hill, the originator of the system of non-restraint, had resigned his situation a year ago, in consequence of some disputes respecting the internal arrangements; but I was afforded every facility in examining the house and the patients by his successor Mr Smith. This asylum was founded by private benevolence, and was intended to afford accommodation for the wealthy, whose payments should be proportionate to their advantages and comforts—and for persons in necessitous circumstances, who were to be admitted as objects of charity, and supported out of the profits on the wealthy class, and the proceeds of the annual subscriptions. The original objects have been in some measure departed from, in consequence of the large admission of county lunatics, who might have been expected to be provided for otherwise. Out of 104 inmates, a large proportion are of the latter character, and hopeless cases. It was therefore the less surprising, that, while the house was remarkably clean, and most of the arrangements suitable, the common rooms in which the worse class of cases were assembled presented more clamour than is usually found now-a-days in the better class of asylums. The most troublesome patients are kept without any restraint; but the surgeon mentioned that this system is not without its drawbacks, as the personal exertions of attendants, which are sometimes necessary as a succedaneum, often prove more injurious than the restraint of simple bandages. On this point I am not qualified to give an opinion; but I formed a very decided one as to the small number of persons who have any employment furnished to them in this house. All persons of infirm brain, except in extreme cases, have some remains of sound and active intellect, and their minds, such as they are, continue liable to the same laws as sane minds. The total seclusion in a house or court-yard, without occupation, which, to a sane person, would be one of the cruellest of punishments, is in a great measure the same thing to most inmates of a lunatic asylum. Such life is itself mental disease. I was therefore struck by the penal air which almost every thing bore in the Lincoln asylum, and the consequent dejection and discontent which many of the inmates manifested. The surgeon endeavours to get a little work in the garden for as many as possible; but for the greater number there is no such occupation, although the good effects of the introduction of weaving and other kinds of work have been abundantly proved in some of our Scottish establishments. I make these remarks in the hope of stimulating the directors to the adoption of this admirable expedient for preserving the comfort and aiding in the cure of this unhappy class of patients.

In the common room devoted to the worst class of female patients, my attention was called to an aged woman of most extraordinary figure, her neck being distorted, and her knees drawn, in consequence of ankylosis of the joints, up to her breast. This poor creature originally resided in a rural district some miles from Lincoln. Being of weak mind, a near relation had secluded her in an outhouse, where she was kept like a mere animal, or perhaps worse, her food being thrust in to her by a window, and her den being cleaned out perhaps once in a fortnight. In this state she is said to have lived for about twenty years; and the consequence was that, while her mind experienced no improvement, her body became contorted into the form in which I now saw it. It was only in consequence of an investigation instituted by the Poor-Law Commissioners, after the act of 1834, that she was rescued from her horrible captivity, and placed here in the comfort which she now enjoys. Another case in this asylum interested me greatly. Amongst the better class of boarders is a middle-aged respectable-looking man, possessing a large and active brain, but deranged on some points. This person, some months ago, took a particular interest in a young man, also a patient, of good abilities, but imperfectly educated, and given over to habits of sloth and indolence. From the senior inmate the junior obtained, in the course of six months, not only much instruction in reading, writing, and accounts, but habits of occupation and attention, and a desire to make himself useful in the world. Thus, by constantly employing the powers of his mind to the utmost, his intellect and self-respect gradually re-developed themselves, and, afterwards, being discharged cured, he obtained a situation which gave him the means of independent subsistence. I was shown a series of grateful and neatly-penned letters which the pupil had since sent, from time to time, to his friendly instructor.

The workhouse, which occupies a similar situation to the asylum, a little farther to the westward, serves for a union of eighteen parishes, comprehending a population of thirty thousand. It is a fair example of the neatly-arranged and well-ordered modern workhouses of the English provinces, having separate apartments and courts for the men, women, boys, and girls. The inmates are a hundred and forty in number, of whom eighty are children, the rest being chiefly aged and infirm persons. The old sit at comfortable firesides, reading or spinning, a few only of the men, who are more than usually strong, working at shoe-making, weaving, or teasing of oakum, in a neighbouring lodge. Amongst the latter, I found a hale fellow of 82, who wielded a mallet for beating out ropes in a most efficient manner, and seemed greatly to enjoy his labour. Amongst the veterans of the fireside was a man who had been in all thirty years in the Lincoln workhouse, being a transfer from the old establishment to the new. He had married in the old workhouse, and with his wife had cheerfully and contentedly boarded for six-and-twenty years at the expense of the public, although during the greater part of that time neither an old nor an infirm man. I inquired if he and his wife were separated under the new system, and found the contrary to be the case, from which I would argue that there is a disposition to relax in this regulation in proper instances. The school-rooms for the children showed the apparatus for learning which marks the improved modes of instruction; and their court-yards are furnished with various kinds of swings to tempt them to useful exercise. Upon the whole, the regulations and arrangements of the establishment, as far as they went, seemed well calculated for a humane but not luxurious provision for the more immediately clamant objects of the public bounty. I was anxious to learn to what extent the provision for the relief of the able-bodied in temporary destitution was taken advantage of, and was shown to the dormitory provided for the males of that class. It had not a single occupant, and, during the whole winter, there had only been three, all of whom went away after being inmates for one or two nights. The ward for able-bodied females generally has a few inmates, being resorted to by unmarried women as a lying-in hospital. Overlooking this special circumstance, the provision of workhouse accommodation for the able-bodied is, as far as the Lincoln union is concerned, an *unaccepted offer*. The house serves expressly as a refuge for old and infirm persons, and destitute children; it does nothing for cases of occasional destitution amongst those who are presumed to have the strength to work for their daily bread. Assuming that this is the general case, it may be felt as a hardship amongst a class long accustomed to look to the public for a portion of their subsistence; and perhaps it would be wise to give a certain discretionary latitude, greater than now exists, for the relief of occasional poor. But, when I mentally contrasted the offer here held out to all, of a clean lodging and good food, burdened only with the proviso of their coming to take it, with the three farthings a-week given in some Scottish parishes to the *infirm* poor, I could not help thinking that the late outcry had not been directed by any means to the worst part of the general case of national pauperism.

A few of what may be called the minor antiquities of Lincoln are extremely curious. There are remains of a house in which John of Gaunt lived with his wife Catherine Swinford. These are now included in a modern-looking mansion in the southern skirts of the city, close to the London road, and display, in particular, a remarkably beautiful small oriel window, in which the lights are of the compound Gothic form, enriched with trefoils and roses. On the opposite side of the road, or street, there are two remaining sides of a very old quadrangular house, which was probably connected with that of John of Gaunt, but is now used for servile purposes: the entry from the road passes under a semi-circular arch, ornamented in the zig-zag style, and against the front are several flat buttresses, with a small carved cornice. On a scaffold accessible from a window in this ancient building, it is known that Lord Hussey was executed in the reign of Henry VIII., for a conspiracy in which he and some other Catholic nobles had been engaged. Another domestic building of what we may call Norman times is on the west side of the High Street, in the centre of the city. It is singularly ornamented in front; and over a semi-arched entry, adorned with mouldings, is a projection which once contained a chimney serving for a room on the second floor. This is usually called the Jew's House, because it was inhabited by a Jewess named Beleset de Wallingford, who was hanged for clipping coin in the eighteenth year of Edward I. It has been depicted and particularly alluded to in the Pictorial History of England, as furnishing evidence that in Norman times the principal room was on the next above the ground floor. We may remark that, in this respect, it strictly resembles a class of houses formerly numerous in Scottish towns, and of which a considerable number of specimens still exist in Hawick, where the ground floor was a series of vaults, as in the contemporary peels and towers of the barons, for keeping cattle and goods, while the domestic apartments were above.

I was particularly curious to learn all that was to be learned respecting the story of Hugh of Lincoln. This tale, first recorded by Matthew Paris, refers, as must be generally known, to a boy of nine years of age, who was said to have been inveigled by Jews into

one of their houses, and there killed for the performance of some of their more mysterious rites. The incident is said to have taken place in the twenty-eighth year of Henry III., or about 1244. It was alluded to by Chaucer, and has been made the subject of popular ballads not only in our own but in other countries. The people of Lincoln still point to the paternal residence of the child, on the west side of the High Street. They show the place where he and his "play-fares" were disputing with the ball, when the Jews beguiled him away; also the well into which his body was cast, and from which, according to the legend, he was heard miraculously crying.

Lady Helen ran to the delp draw-well,
And knelt upon her knee:
"My bonny Sir Hugh, an ye be here,
I pray thee speik to me."
"The leid is wondrous heavy, mother,
The well is wondrous deep;
A keen pen-knife sticks in my heart,
A word I downa speik."

What foundation there may be in truth for this story [of course, the idea of criminality on the part of the Jews is ridiculous] it would be difficult now to ascertain. Not many years ago, under a sepulchral altar which tradition pointed out in the cathedral as that of St Hugh, the bones of a boy were discovered, and were universally believed to have been those of the sainted child. It seems scarcely questionable that the story is true as far as that a boy, named Hugh, was killed under mysterious circumstances, and that the incident became a pretext for wreaking out every kind of cruelty upon the Jews. Such horrors are dreadful when they take place; but we must surely admire that fine arrangement in Providence by which the most dismal doings of an early age become in time the themes of romantic legend, and of the most interesting poetical association. Lincoln would not be quite what it is to a sentimental traveller like me, were it not for the story of little Hugh.

THE RIVAL EDITORS.

In a certain town of England, which shall be nameless, there flourished some years ago two rival weekly newspapers. The one, which supported the ultra-Tory party, and rejoiced in the title of "The Universal Conservative Post," was very ably edited by Mr Charles Phipps; the other, which advocated principles of an exactly opposite tendency, was called "Vox Populi, or the Voice of the People," and was published under the direction of Mr Walker Hodgkins. As the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of R— were pretty fairly divided betwixt the two great political parties, Messrs Phipps and Hodgkins contrived to make their journals pay tolerably well; but, not satisfied with this equal partition of profits, as they were both red hot about their principles, there was a constant struggle between them for mastery; and if one happened for a few weeks to obtain an advantage over the other in the amount of sale, the comparative numbers were blazoned forth in large type on the first page of the fortunate journal, to the infinite mortification of the discomfited editor, who did not fail, in his next publication, to throw out all manner of gibes and sneers against his triumphant adversary, taking care, at the same time, to insinuate, that this temporary ascendancy, if real, was attributable to causes by no means so creditable as to afford matter for glorification, and that, in short, "the less that was said about it the better."

The competition between these two gentlemen to obtain the earliest intelligence of every matter of public interest, and to be the first to announce it to their subscribers, was intense, and not unfrequently led to the most ludicrous mis-statements; and on these occasions, forgetting how often the same thing had happened to himself, the one who had escaped the misfortune did not fail to indulge in the most cutting sarcasms against his unhappy brother; invariably asserting that the piece of intelligence in question had been in his possession some time before the other had it, but that he had too much respect for his readers to attempt to cram them with such absurd and idle rumours, and so forth. The desire, also, to outstrip each other, and the apprehension that if one passed over an event as being too unimportant to record, the other would insert it, often induced them to detail circumstances of the most trivial nature, and even sometimes to bring private matters before the public with which the public had no concern—making their papers, in short, the vehicles of scandal and of idle gossip; and as the period of publication approached—for these journals appeared on consecutive days—the editors' rooms were frequently not only the scenes of earnest meditation as to the most effective method of promoting their own success and annihilating the enemy, but also of much trouble and perplexity, arising

from the expectations and disappointments of the different candidates for literary fame, who, aspiring to see themselves in print, took advantage of the well-known editorial rivalry to obtain their ends.

It happened that there resided in the neighbourhood of R— a certain young gentleman called Mr Ferdinand Adolphus Potts; and whether his parents, having the gift of prophecy, had conferred this romantic appellation on their offspring in order that his name might accord with his aspiring genius, or whether the genius had been awakened by the name, and he had thought it incumbent on him to render himself worthy of so high-sounding and euphonious a title, certain it is that the youth was fired with ambition to distinguish himself—and the path to fame which he chose was literature.

He had hitherto, however, been exceedingly unsuccessful, not with the public but with the publishers. The public, he had no doubt, would have done him justice, but the publishers had declined having any thing to do with his volume of poems, and the editors of the magazines had uniformly rejected his productions. Still resolved to see himself in print, and confident that, if once brought fairly before the public, he must succeed, he had at length, as a last resource, composed a poem on cruelty to animals in general, and to the cockchafer in particular—it happening to be the season when those unlucky insects make their annual debut in this troublesome world. This article he considered a perfect treasure; and he sent it to the editor of the Universal Post, in the absolute assurance, not only of its being accepted, but of himself being immediately offered a handsome salary as a regular contributor to the journal; his only doubt was, whether it would not be a degradation to his genius to accept the proposal. But, alas! the pages of the Universal Post seemed as inaccessible to his effusions as all other pages; and, after waiting a fortnight in the hope of seeing his ambition gratified, he called on Mr Phipps to inquire into the reason of the delay.

With some difficulty the editor recollected that a MS. had been left at the office with the signature of Philocockchafer, but he assured the indignant poet that the subject was not one of sufficiently general interest to warrant its insertion in his journal; and although Mr Potts dwelt on the important influence his effusion might have on the morals of the rising generation, and on the happiness and immunity from suffering of the unfortunate animals themselves, his eloquence was expended in vain; and, after venting his indignation in every opprobrious term he could think of, he rushed out of the room in a paroxysm of rage, vowing signal vengeance against the author of his mortification.

It happened, on the evening of the day on which this scene occurred in the editor's room, that that worthy man, anxious to withdraw himself from the busy world, and to direct his thoughts exclusively to his "leader" for the following Thursday, and somewhat oppressed by the painful apprehension that the rival journal would eclipse him this week in the article of local and domestic intelligence, betook himself to a shady and retired walk in the neighbourhood of the town, known by the name of Ivy Lane; and there, as he was lounging slowly on, with his hands behind him and his eyes half-shut in deep meditation, he suddenly stumbled over something on the ground, which, on looking down, he perceived was a crutch. He picked it up, and then sought about for the owner. No one was in sight; but, in the course of this survey, happening to turn his head in the direction of a dry ditch that bordered the road, his eye alighted on an old wallet. This led him to further investigation, and, on approaching the spot, he saw lying in the ditch the mortal remains of a poor old beggar, who had for years frequented the neighbourhood, and obtained a scanty living out of the alms of the inhabitants, by whom he was well known, and generally tolerated. There was no appearance of violence about the body; the man had evidently died from age and infirmity, a consummation that had been long looked for. "Poor old Digges!" said Mr Phipps; "so here you are at last, eh!—come to the end of your rambles! The last time I saw you you were leaning against the post!" But the word post awakened a new train of ideas. "The deuce!" cried he, "what a pity! This is only Tuesday, and my paper won't be out till Thursday!" And then he reflected that if he went back to the town and made known his discovery at the poor-house, it would be scarcely possible to prevent its reaching the office of the Vox Populi, and that thus his rival would have the

advantage of being the first to announce the news of old Digges' decease to the neighbourhood; a result most provoking, certainly, and which he looked upon as a wanton flinging away of a piece of good luck that fortune had thrown in his way. "But why can't I keep the secret till their paper's thrown off, and then walk this way and pretend I have just made the discovery! It will make no manner of difference to poor Digges—none in the world, poor fellow! He passed most of his nights under a hedge, and I've heard him say, he preferred it in summer. It's getting late now, and it's scarcely likely any body else will be walking this way. But, by the bye, let's see what's in the wallet; for if the old fellow left any money, it will be my duty to take care of it. So Mr Phipps opened the wallet, and found in it not only some crusts of bread, and the usual trappings of a beggar, but also silver and pence to the amount of thirteen shillings. "It would scarcely be right," thought he, "to leave this here; for if any of his own fraternity should find him, it will never, I fear, come to the hands of his lawful heirs." So Mr Phipps folded the money in a bit of paper, and put it in his pocket; after which, having covered up old Digges with some leaves and branches, and laid his crutch and his wallet beside him, he turned his steps homewards.

But there had been a spectator to the latter part of this little drama that the worthy editor never dreamed of—no less a person than Mr Ferdinand Potts, the disappointed contributor, who, boiling with revenge, had directed his steps to this retired quarter, in order to compose his thoughts to an ode that was to extinguish, and for ever annihilate, the unfortunate Phipps.

Had Potts witnessed the whole of the affair, he might have made some approximation to a right interpretation of the editor's doings; but he was on the other side of the hedge, and had only arrived in time to decry Phipps abstract the money from the wallet, and then stoop down and conceal something, he did not know what, in the ditch. But no sooner was the obnoxious editor out of sight, than Mr Ferdinand hurried round to see what he had been hiding.

Mr Ferdinand was not very wise when he was in his best senses, and he was now somewhat out of them from the mortification his vanity had suffered by the rejection of his "article;" and he was rather inclined to think that a man capable of that rejection (which he was certain must have arisen from the worst motives), would be equal to any other act, however atrocious; in short, to clothe the idea in his own words, he thought "there was nothing too bad for him." Without weighing the matter further, therefore, he jumped at once to the conclusion, that Phipps, if he had not actually murdered the man, which he was disposed to believe he had, had certainly robbed him—opened his wallet, appropriated the money, the amount of which he had not been able to ascertain, and then concealed the body, from some private motive which he could not exactly penetrate—probably till he had got safe off with the booty; though the pains taken to hide the corpse rather inclined Mr Ferdinand to believe in the *delictum*. Without further deliberation, therefore, he hurried off to the chief constable of the place; and, relating what he had seen, to which he did not scruple, under the influence of his excited feelings, to make a few additions, roundly accused Mr Phipps of the robbery, implying the strongest suspicions that murder had preceded the crime.

The constable, in his secret heart, thought the thing impossible; but he was a Radical reformer, a furious partisan of the rival journal, and he did not feel it to be his duty to oppose his reason to a direct accusation of this sort; so he consented to accompany Mr Potts to Ivy Lane, where, sure enough, he found old Digges lying in the ditch, covered with leaves and branches, and with his crutch and wallet beside him. There was nothing, therefore, left for him to do but to proceed straightway to a magistrate and disclose the appalling fact. By this time, however, the magistrate, who happened to be somewhat of an invalid, was gone to bed; and the affair, when he heard what Potts and the constable had to say, appeared to him so absurd, that all their representations could not induce him to take any steps in it, till he had better grounds to go upon; so he dismissed the official and the indignant accuser, and desired them to return to him in the morning. "And by that time," said the constable to his companion, "if he really has been meddling with any thing he shouldn't, he'll have time to get off, if so he as gets an inkling that we're after him."

This hint sunk deep into the mind of Potts; and, determined that, having embarked in the affair, he would carry it through, he made up his mind to spend the intervening hours in watching the editor's house; and accordingly he proceeded thither, and passed the remainder of the night in pacing the flags before the door.

In the mean time, Mr Phipps, after he had lain down in his bed, began, somehow or other, to feel rather uneasy, not that he had any apprehension of what was meditating against him—such an idea would never have entered his head—but being really at heart a good-natured benevolent man, he could not help fancying he had not done right in leaving the body

of the poor old beggar lying in the ditch all night; he thought of hogs, and dogs, and polecats, and vermin of all sorts. Then, all at once, it occurred to him that he had not sufficiently investigated whether the man was actually dead or not! There might have been some spark of life left—he might only have fainted from exhaustion. "Good heavens! and I have left him there to die!" Distressed beyond measure at this last idea, which was worse than all the rest, Mr Phipps tossed and tumbled in his uneasy bed till the morning's dawn; and then, as the birds began to twitter, and the first gleam of light peeped through the chinks of his shutter, he jumped out of bed, and hastily putting on his clothes, and creeping quietly down stairs and out of the house, that he might not disturb the family, he directed his steps, with all the speed he could command, to the scene of his last night's adventure.

But here again Mr Potts was too cunning for him. He had seen the editor open his shutter, and from the earliness of the hour, suspecting mischief, had placed himself out of sight to watch the event; and when the worthy man emerged from the door, and with a hurried gait directed his steps towards Ivy Lane, he rushed off to his friend the constable, and dragging him out of bed, urged him to put on his clothes, and accompany him, without a moment's delay, to ascertain what new enormity the atrocious Phipps was about to commit.

With considerable anxiety as to what state he might find the body of the pauper in, Mr Phipps proceeded towards the place where he had left it; and his astonishment may be better conceived than described, as he himself would have said, when he found that old Digges, crutch, wallet, and all, had vanished from the spot, leaving no trace or vestige behind by which he could guess how, when, or in what direction, they had disappeared! The editor rubbed his eyes and looked again—examined the ditch for some extent—searched and searched—but all in vain. There lay the branches and the leaves, but the beggar and all his belongings were assuredly gone!

With his arms thrown behind him and his chin sunk upon his breast, in deep cogitation, the amazed editor once more turned his steps homewards; but scarcely had he reached the end of the lane, when his reverie was rudely disturbed by feeling the heavy hand of Redburn the constable laid upon his shoulder, and receiving an imperative summons to attend that official to the magistrate's, without delay. He offered an explanation—for the triumph of Potts soon disclosed the mystery of his arrest—but without success; for where reason might have listened, prejudice was deaf; so, denouncing his unlucky stars and his own folly, he relinquished the vain endeavour, and resigned himself to the evil he could not avoid.

When, after waiting some time, the party were introduced into the presence of the magistrate, Mr Phipps again proffered his explanation, and was listened to with every reasonable disposition to believe; but as he could not make up his mind to expose his motives for delaying to give information of the death of the pauper and for concealing the body, his explanation was unsatisfactory, and his conduct continued to appear quite unaccountable. The money, too, which he did not deny having taken from the beggar's wallet, was still in his waistcoat pocket; and, altogether, strange and absurd as it appeared, the magistrate began to fear there was nothing for it but to commit him. Unwilling, however, to do anything hastily, lest he should expose himself to ridicule by his precipitation, the worthy justice desired the party to wait till he had taken his breakfast, and had time to deliberate on the course he should pursue; and, in order to ensure himself against any unpleasant consequences, he sent for a Mr Wilkes, who lived hard by, and who had formerly been in the commission, resolving to be guided by his advice.

"Digges!" said the gentleman when he heard the story, "why, if I am not much mistaken, I saw Digges standing at my back-door just now, as I passed to come to you. Send one of your servants to inquire if he has not been there."

It was quite true. Digges not only had been there, but was there still, and willingly accompanied the servant to prove his identity.

"All he knew about the matter," he said, when he was interrogated, "was, that from long fasting and over fatigue, he had been seized with a sudden faintness in Ivy Lane, as he was making for the town, where he had intended to pass the night; that he did not know how long he lay there, but that, on recovering his consciousness, he had found himself strewn over with leaves and branches; and that as soon as he was able, he had got up and crawled towards the nearest houses; where, when the people rose in the morning, they had given him some breakfast; but that, missing the money out of his wallet, he had proceeded to Mr Wilkes, with the intention of asking that gentleman's advice."

Here was an end of the murder: but the imputation of the robbery might have clung to poor Mr Phipps to the end of his days, had it not been for a paper found in his room, all ready prepared for the press, wherein he detailed the circumstance of his discovering the pauper's body, the amount of money in his wallet, and all other particulars, only stating that the event happened on Wednesday morning instead of on Tuesday night. His motive was penetrated; and the poor editor escaped with no worse chastisement for his folly, than the ridicule of his neighbours, and

the triumphant gibes and jeers of the rival journalist, whom it furnished with a weapon of offence and defence, and an inexhaustible fund of raillery and sarcasm, to the end of the chapter.

A GO-AHEAD COUNTRY.

MR WILLIAM KENNEDY accompanied Lord Durham to Canada in 1838, as commissioner to inquire into the municipal institutions of that country, with a view to their improvement. He was prosecuting this line of duty, when events in England suddenly determined Lord Durham to abandon his government and return home. Mr Kennedy, for whose services there was no longer any need, determined, before his own return, to journey into the United States and Texas. He arrived in the latter country in the summer of 1839, and proceeded, no doubt with much curiosity, to examine the social and political condition of a state which, three years before, could not be said to have any defined existence. "I found," he says, "a stable government, religion respected, laws well administered, protection afforded to property and person, and the general tone of manners the same as in the United States." Astonished at all this, he resolved to make such observations and collect such documents as might enable him to give to the English public a comprehensive account of Texas. The result of his resolution is now before us in the form of two goodly octavo volumes,* being unquestionably the first authentic account we have received of the condition of Texas since it became an independent state, as well as of the transactions which led to its becoming so.

Having some years ago given in this place an ample description of Texas, we shall not pause upon the first part of Mr Kennedy's book, which is devoted to the "geography, natural history, and topography" of the country, farther than to remind the reader that it is a region as large as France, situated between the United States and Mexico—a vast slope of fertile and healthy prairie-land descending towards the Gulf of Mexico, and as yet only settled along the coast of that sea, between the 27th and 30th parallels of north latitude. Mr Kennedy's second book, which occupies the latter half of the first, and more than the first half of the second volume, contains a history of the country, from its being, about 1820, a neglected province of Mexico, till, having become partially settled by men from "the States," and quarrels having arisen between these and the government, it was made the scene of a horrid warfare, which lasted two years, and terminated in 1836 in a successful assertion of independence. At the time of the war, the white free population was about 30,000, much scattered, and they were never able to bring so many as a thousand armed men into the field. Santa Anna, the Mexican president, came against them with 8000 men. They seem to have fought like wild-cats. A party of a hundred and eighty-two, in the fort of Alamo, surrounded by the whole of Santa Anna's force, refused all terms, and maintained the contest for ten days, killing several hundreds of Mexicans. When at length overwhelmed, not a man asked quarter. A female, the sole survivor, relates that she saw the last of the garrison fall, while raising his musket against a host. A few months after, the Mexican force, 1500 strong, was attacked at San Jacinto, by seven hundred Texans, and, after a fight of eighteen minutes, were completely overcome. The fortunate capture of Santa Anna on this occasion paralysed all farther efforts of the Mexican government, which must henceforth be in greater danger from the Texans than the Texans can be from it. The flow of hardy and adventurous settlers from the States has since then been incessant, and the population is now believed to be upwards of 300,000. Mr Kennedy expresses his confident expectation that, in seven years, it will not be less than a million. Plantations are every where rising; many towns are in the process of being built; a post is in full operation throughout the vast territory; the whole machinery of a regular government exists at Austin; English law is administered in circuit towns; and treaties of commerce have been established with the Netherlands and with Britain. Against a debt of £600,000 (the very existence of which, by the bye, shows a confidence in the stability of the baby republic) Texas has a hundred and fifty millions of acres of unappropriated land, the sale of which may not only be expected to clear off all incumbrances, but to be the main support of government for a century to come.

The prairies of Texas, unexampled in the beauty of their natural vegetation, become, when cultivated, most favourable seats of cotton and sugar culture, as also for the rearing of Indian corn. It is confidently said, that the soil of this new country will produce 1000 lbs. of cotton for 400 of the Southern States of the Union. The sugar-cane grows to a greater height than in Louisiana, and sweetens higher up. "I have seen," says Mr Kennedy, "an estimate of the produce

* Texas: The Rise, Progress, and Prospects of the Republic of Texas. By William Kennedy, Esq. 2 vols. London: R. Hastings 1841.

of sugar in a small plantation, which, notwithstanding the waste arising from very imperfect machinery, gave about 3500 lbs. to the acre. From fifty to sixty bushels per acre is the average crop of Indian corn. Tobacco and indigo grow luxuriantly, besides many other useful plants." Mr Kennedy mentions that, "in addition to iron, the utilitarian sovereign of metals, Texas possesses coal—the grand auxiliary of the arts which tend to enrich and civilise the world." But it is as an agricultural country that Texas must flourish. Her object will be to find markets for her cotton and sugar, using the ships of other countries for her commerce, and freely buying their manufactured commodities in exchange. As she can undersell the southern states of the union in the article cotton, she has only to become a producer of this article to a sufficient extent, and to induce England to become a large customer for it, in order to bring about a great change in the United States. Either the tariff-laws must give way, or the demand of the southern states for separation must become overpowering. It was evidently the policy of England to form the treaty above mentioned with Texas, as it not only opens a field for the employment of her commercial marine, but must soon demand no small quantity of British manufactures, provided that we take Texian produce in exchange.

Mr Kennedy's volumes abound in striking proofs of the energy and perseverance of the Anglo-American race in colonising new and favourable soils, and in overcoming the obstacles of various kinds which rise against them in a new country. The knowledge that there were fertile lands in Texas, for which settlers were wanted, and that these lands were physically superior to their own, although settlement upon them must necessarily be attended with a host of early difficulties, and only in the long run prove advantageous, immediately brought forth from every part of the United States, but particularly from those of the south, a host of long-backed, long-headed, determined "characters," with their families; and, in an almost incredibly short space of time, Texas exhibited what we must consider as the basis or stock of a numerous, hardy, and vigorous population. The healthy bounding vitality of a people under these circumstances, contrasts singularly with the tameness and monotony of condition which form the leading marks of an old community. "Go-ahead" is the favourite phrase, and the actual leading maxim of conduct of such persons; and the result in some instances is wonderful. The port of Galveston, now the largest town in Texas, had, in 1837, but seven houses, and the arrivals at the port were about one in the month. "In May 1839, there were thirty sail of vessels in the harbour at one time; three steamers plying regularly between it and New Orleans, and the same number between it and Houston. A brig arrived from Boston (a voyage of 3000 miles), with 150 tons of ice, to cool the beverage of the citizens, and otherwise minister to their comfort. There were about 300 houses, sprinkled over a large surface, and a closely-packed population of more than 2000 souls. Two wharfs were in progress, and a pier and mole commenced. The public buildings, which were, as might be expected, on a small scale, were a customhouse, court-house, jail, commissariat and naval storehouse, market, magazine, armoury, arsenal, and hospital. Two hotels were in existence, and three in progress. There were three large warehouses and fifteen retail stores, six licensed taverns and coffee-houses, two printing-offices, reading-rooms, consuls', lawyers', doctors', notaries-public, and magistrates' offices; druggists', confectioners', and fruit stores, bakeries, slaughter and oyster houses, and shops occupied by carpenters, masons, painters and glaziers, cement and wooden cistern makers, turners, cabinet-makers, ship-joiners and plumbers, sailmakers and riggers, tin and sheet iron manufacturers, blacksmiths, gunsmiths and armourers, watch and trinket menders, saddle and harness makers, cordwainers, tailors, milliners and dressmakers, barbers; also boarding-houses and private houses, and several lumber yards replete with materials to build more."

Mr Kennedy adds—"As an example of the 'go-ahead' principle, I was informed that the timber of a frame-house, containing 20,000 dollars' worth of goods, had been growing in the State of Maine ninety days before."

The early immigrants into Texas from the southern states brought their slaves with them, and the practice has been continued. This has led to Texas becoming a slave-holding country, which is much to be regretted, but cannot be very readily remedied. There are not, however, above 10,000 slaves in the country, and, as their importation from Africa is prohibited, and white labour is not incompatible with the climate, it may be hoped that, in time, this blot will be removed.

Mr Kennedy makes the following remarks for the information of those proposing to settle in Texas as agriculturists:—"In the selection of land, settlers will always be more or less influenced by the habits and associations of the country they have left; therefore emigrants from a low-lying district are likely to prefer the level region of Texas, while those who have from infancy breathed the mountain air will direct their steps towards the highlands. For a similar reason, some will prefer a wooded section, and others an open or lightly-timbered prairie. For the emigrant of small capital, or the European settler unused to a warm climate and the laborious process of 'clearing' forest-land, the upland prairie, backed by a timbered and

perennial water-course, offers by far the most eligible 'location.'

To hew out a farm from the heart of the primeval forest is a ponderous and life-consuming task, even for the American backwoodsman, accustomed to wield the axe from boyhood, and to trust for subsistence to the unerring rifle. If the same process be performed on an extensive scale, by the aid of hired labour, the expense of clearing frequently exceeds the value of the land when cleared. To all these drawbacks must be added the diseases incidental to a residence amidst the shades of the newly opened forest, where the vegetable accumulations of ages are suddenly exposed to the beams of a scorching sun, and where heaps of levelled timber are left to rot upon the ground. There the atmosphere is inevitably tainted with noxious exhalations, which soon blanch the ruddiest cheek and pals the most vigorous arm.

On the prairies, nature has prepared the soil for the husbandman, who has only to enclose his farm and insert the ploughshare, which there encounters no obstacle. The labour of cultivation is consequently easy. A heavy plough and a strong team are required the first year, to break up the tough sward and turn over the soil. The Indian corn is dropped in the furrows and covered with a hoe, which, with an occasional light ploughing to clear away the weeds, is the only labour bestowed upon it, until it is fit to gather. It must be understood, however, that the crop raised in this manner will not reach an average quantity, although it arrives very opportunely to meet the necessities of the settler. By turning the grass down, exposing the roots to the sun, and leaving the soil undisturbed, the sward becomes mellowed in a single season, and, while undergoing the process of decomposition, affords nourishment to the growing corn. In the ensuing spring, the roots of the wild grass are completely rotted, and the plough passes through a rich light mould, fit for all the purposes of husbandry. The ordinary operations of farming may now be conducted in the usual way, and the labour of cultivating a light soil, unincumbered with rocks or stumps, is so trifling that the farmer has sufficient time to improve his land and buildings. On a level plain of rich mould, the plough may be managed by a stripling; on newly-cleared timber-lands, it requires strength and skill, the share must be sharpened frequently, and is often broken, and, at the best, the work advances slowly. The superior facility of working open land, the saving in the wear of farming implements, the economy of time, and, of course, the greater degree of certainty in the farmer's calculations, with the comparative exemption from local disease, give a pre-eminence to the prairie over the timbered land not to be materially reduced by any inconvenience that may be occasioned by an inadequate supply of wood. It would be sounder economy for a farmer to settle in the midst of a prairie, and draw his fuel and fence-wood five miles, than to undertake the clearing of a farm in the forest. According to an experienced American authority, the agriculturists of Illinois have become aware of the fact, and there have been numerous instances of farmers in that rich and improving state, who, having purchased a small piece of woodland for its timber, have selected their farms at a distance, on the prairie. Supposing the soil of both to be of equal quality, a labourer can cultivate two-thirds more of prairie than of timbered land; the returns are larger, and the capital to be invested less. The soil of the rolling prairies of Texas is a deep black loam mixed with sand in various proportions—not certainly so rich as the timbered alluvions of the Brazos, which have a soil formed by the decomposition of vegetable matter to the depth of more than ten feet—but valuable for all the purposes of agriculture as well as for grazing. With wood, water, a boundless range for stock of all descriptions, a propitious climate, and fertile plains free from the obstruction of timber or stone, what can the husbandman desire more!

We are introduced by Mr Kennedy to a very remarkable natural wonder. "Marine fossil remains, and silicious petrifications, are found in different parts of the country. In the middle and northern sections of the district lying between the Trinity and Neches rivers, great numbers of petrified post oak lie imbedded in the soil, some in a horizontal position, but the larger portion nearly upright, with an inclination towards the north. They are extremely hard, giving fire to steel; generally of a light grey or reddish brown colour, and present distinctly the form of the trunk of the post oak, even to the knots. 'Near the head of the Pasigono River,' according to a late *Topographical Description of Texas*, 'is the celebrated petrified forest, which has attracted so much attention from naturalists. Here is a forest of several hundred acres of trees standing, which are turned to stone. This is a plain contradiction to the theory which has hitherto existed on the subject of petrification. The doctrine of submergation being required to produce petrification, is entirely disproved. Petrifications which exist in many parts of this country show evident marks of recent formation. Trees which are growing are sometimes partially changed to stone.' Minute examination will, I apprehend, deprive this stone forest of much of its marvellous pretensions, which are doubtless owing to silicious springs, or the rapid formation of incrusting concretionary limestone, which readily moulds itself to the shape of a foreign body. The deposits from calcareous springs form equally on vegetable substances, on stones, metals, wood, or lead."

One reference to the zoology of the country—"Wild horses, or *mustangs*, as they are called by the Mexicans, are numerous in the northern prairies and the western sections of Texas, where they keep ahead of population. They are seldom large or heavy, but show blood, are well proportioned, hardy, active, and docile, if caught young. They are generally about thirteen hands high, and of all colours, though piebald, light brown, chestnut, and dun prevail. These animals are the descendants of Barbary horses introduced into the New World by the Spaniards, and set at large on the abundant pastures, where they have multiplied amazingly. They are ridden, hunted, and, in times of scarcity, eaten by the wild Indians of the Mexican frontier. There are two modes of catching them—by noosing them with a cord made of twisted strips of raw hide, attached to a long pole, and called the *lazo*, and by surrounding and driving them into pens prepared for their reception. The appearance of the wild horse in his Texian pastures has been graphically sketched by an eye-witness:—"We rode through beds of sunflowers, miles in extent, their dark seedy centres and radiating yellow leaves following the sun through the day from east to west, and drooping when the shadows fell over them. These were sometimes beautifully varied with a delicate flower, of an azure tint, yielding no perfume, but forming a pleasant contrast to the bright yellow of the sunflower. About half-past ten we discerned a creature in motion at an immense distance, and instantly started in pursuit. Fifteen minutes' riding brought us near enough to discover, by its fleetness, that it could not be a buffalo, yet it was too large for an antelope or deer. On we went, and soon distinguished the erect head, the flowing mane, and the beautiful proportions of the wild horse of the prairie. He saw us, and sped away with an arrowy fleetness till he gained a distant eminence, when he turned to gaze at us, and suffered us to approach within four hundred yards, when he bounded away again in another direction, with a graceful velocity delightful to behold. We paused—for, to pursue him with a view to capture was clearly out of the question. When he discovered we were not following him, he also paused, and now seemed to be inspired with curiosity equal to our own, for, after making a slight turn, he came nearer, until we could distinguish the inquiring expression of his clear, bright eye, and the quick curl of his inflated nostrils."

We had no hopes of catching, and did not wish to kill him, but our curiosity led us to approach him slowly. We had not advanced far before he moved away, and, circling round, approached on the other side. It was a beautiful animal—a sorrel, with jet black mane and tail. As he moved, we could see the muscles quiver in his glossy limbs; and when, half playfully and half in fright, he tossed his flowing mane in the air, and flourished his long silky tail, our admiration knew no bounds, and we longed—hopelessly, vexatiously longed—to possess him. We might have shot him where we stood; but, had we been starving, we could scarcely have done it. He was free, and we loved him for the very possession of that liberty we longed to take from him; but we would not kill him. We fired a rifle over his head: he heard the shot and the whiz of the ball, and away he went, disappearing in the next hollow, showing himself again as he crossed the distant ridges, still seeming smaller, until he faded away to a speck on the far horizon's verge."

We conclude by earnestly recommending Mr Kennedy's work, as a full and to all appearance faithful and judicious account of Texas, in which character it appears to us qualified not more to yield useful information to those who may have to form connexions with the country, than to enlighten and entertain those general readers who only regard it as a curious problem in the history of our species.

MITCHELL'S SCREW-PILE LIGHT-HOUSES—SAFETY BEACONS ON SAND-BANKS.

[From the Dundee Warder.]

AMONG the mechanical inventions of late years, none are so eminently entitled to the serious attention of the government and the public as those which have for their object the preservation of human life. Among these may be particularly enumerated various improvements on the life-boat, Denham and Manby's safety apparatus, and Mitchell's screw-pile, affording a firm foundation for light-houses and safety beacons, on dangerous shoals and banks, however treacherous and shifting the nature of the bottom. The latter invention has completely overthrown the time-consecrated theory of the instability of a "house built upon the sand;" for, by its aid, houses taking root, as it were, in the mere sand, now rear their summits high above the waters, on which the storms may descend, and the waves beat, for a thousand years, without injuring the fabric. Of the immense annual sacrifice of human life on our shores from shipwreck, a very large proportion may be attributed to the want of light-houses in proper situations. It is by no means sufficient for the protection of the thousands of vessels employed in the commerce of this great maritime nation, that beacons should point out the sunken rocks and hidden shoals around the coast, where shipwrecks have been most frequent. It is not sufficient that life-boats should be stationed along the sea-board, at points, in many cases, ten or fifteen miles apart. More vessels, on an average, are lost yearly on bare and banks at the entrance to har-

bours, than on those parts of the coast which are known by the expressive and appropriate designation of "iron-bound." A heavily-laden ship, however faithfully built, getting aground on the softest bank, with a heavy sea running, will often go to pieces in a few hours, and become as complete a loss as if she had struck on a ledge of rocks. The port of Liverpool, the navigation of which is beset with dangers of this description, furnishes but too many examples in point. Buoys and light-ships, except in comparatively sheltered situations, and in smooth water, are inefficient substitutes for light-houses. The most disastrous shipwrecks have been occasioned—some of them at a very recent date—by light-ships being driven from their moorings by the severity of the gales. The expense of building and keeping up these floating beacons is also another objection to their use. It was reserved for Mr Mitchell, of Belfast (a gentleman whose mechanical genius may be well accounted unrivalled, from the fact that he labours under total deprivation of sight), to furnish, by the invention of the screw-pile, a means of erecting permanent and substantial light-houses, in positions where, previously, it would have been considered impossible even to find anchorage for a floating light, on those fatal shoals and banks which intercept the navigation of so many of the finest estuaries in these kingdoms. The Goodwin Sands, long known and dreaded by the mariners of all nations as the most dangerous shoal in the English Channel, are now guarded by a safety beacon, on Mr Mitchell's principle, which has already been instrumental in saving the lives of several shipwrecked seamen, to whom it afforded a providential refuge after their vessel had been cast away—not to speak of the numerous accidents it has prevented, by the exhibition of the elevated lantern. At the entrance of Fleetwood-on-Wyre, a new and prosperous port in the Irish Channel, Mr Mitchell has formed a screw-pile light-house, which cannot fail to be of vast advantage to seamen visiting that part of the English coast. The stability, no less than the ornamental beauty of this building, has elicited the admiration of the best judges in such matters; among whom we may mention the celebrated Lieut. Denham, R.N. The following minute description of the erection is copied from that officer's late work on the navigation of the Mersey, Dee, &c.:

"The foundation of the building is formed of seven screw piles, six of which are the angles of a hexagon, about 46 feet in diameter, and the seventh pile stands in the centre of the figure. The heads of all the outer piles have an inclination inwards, by which the diameter of the framework connecting the top of the columns, and upon which the house stands, is contracted to about 27 feet. Each screw-pile is formed of a malleable iron shaft, about 15 feet long and 5 inches diameter. On each pile a 3-foot screw is firmly keyed near its lower extremity, beneath which is placed a large drill or opening bit. At the upper end of the shaft is a screw of 18 inches long and 2 inches diameter, for drawing down and screwing the wooden column to the iron pile, which latter stands about five feet out of the ground. The columns are thus prepared:—Seven logs of Baltic timber are selected, of the largest and best quality; the centre one is 56 feet in length, and all the others are 46 feet. The pedestals rise about a third of their height, and the remainder of the shafts are rounded, both for appearance and as lessening any vibration from the action of the sea. An opening in the lower end of each column is then made, of 5 inches in diameter, and to the depth of about 8 feet, by boring in the manner of a water-pipe; strong iron hoops are then driven upon it, hot—the first about 8 feet up, the second about 4 feet, and the third at its lower extremity. This hooping will give to the column greater strength than it originally possessed, especially as the wood removed by boring is the weakest in the tree, and adds scarcely any thing to its actual strength. The column being raised perpendicularly above the iron pile, the end of the latter is introduced into the opening prepared for it, and which has been made to fit accurately upon it. When the top of the pile has reached the end of the cavity, screwing on (by capstan) the foot of the column will be inserted in the bank about three feet; the wood, when wet, will clasp firmly on the iron, but, as an additional security, the internal screw attaches the two together. The framing upon which the house stands is firmly secured round the centre column and to the heads of the outer ones, by means of cast-iron capitals, let down over the heads of the columns, the capitals being cast hollow for the purpose; to the abacus of these the top framing is secured with screw bolts passing down through the wood and iron, having nuts on the under side—all boring or cutting into the main support of the building being thus avoided—and the adjacent parts of the framing are bound together by wrought-iron straps and knees; the beams which radiate from the centre to the heads of the outer columns are 12 inches deep, by 7 inches wide, and those which connect the heads of the outer columns, 12 inches by 4. To give lateral strength to the building to resist the effect of heavy bodies drifting against it, 24 angle braces, from round iron of 1½ inch diameter, and carefully wrought, are applied, by which a resisting power, equal at least to 350 tons, is presented in every direction. These braces are secured at the top to transoms cast with the capitals, and beneath to strong wrought-iron bands, with projecting bolt-holes; by these means boring into the columns is again avoided; the braces are keyed in at their crossing, and the whole made firm. The light-keeper's house, which is hexagonal, is in diameter from angle to

angle 22 feet, and 9 feet in height. The centre column rises to the base of the lantern, which, with the roof, it assists to support, giving great additional stability to the whole structure. The corner-posts of the house are 7 inches by 6; all remaining studs 6 inches by 4; beams of roofs 9 inches by 5; and all outside planking, together with floor and roof of house, is 2 inches thick. The house has an outside door and three windows, and is divided into two apartments, one having a fireplace and the floor tiled; the walls and ceiling of both apartments are lathed and stuccoed. The lantern, which is 12-sided, is 10 feet in diameter, and in height to the top of the windows 8 feet, by which the lights are raised above the highest spring-tide level about 31 feet, or 44½ above half-tide level. The lights (in this case, of dioptric order) show throughout the periphery, and the roof is covered with strong sheet-iron (a lightning repeller and conductor of course.) The light-keeper's house is covered with sheet-lead, and a light iron railing is carried round the top of the building and the platform on which it stands. Access to the latter is effected by a Jacob's ladder of wrought-iron, secured to one of the columns and to the lantern, by a winding stair within the house."

We hope that the government will see the advantage of placing these safety beacons on the principal shoals on the coasts of the United Kingdom. Such a reward is eminently due to Mr Mitchell for his important invention.

A LONG WHILE AGO.

[From the Poetical Remains of L. E. L. (Mrs Maclean), published in connexion with a Memoir of her Life by Mr Laman Blanchard.]

Still hangeth down the old accustom'd willow,
Hiding the silver underneath each leaf—
So drops the long hair from some maiden pillow,
When midnight heareth the else silent grief;
There floats the water-lily, like a sovereign
Whose lovely empire is a fairy world,
The purple dragon-fly above it hovering,
As when its fragile ivory uncurl'd

A long while ago.

I hear the bees in sleepy music winging
From the wild thyme where they have pass'd the noon—
There is the blackbird in the hawthorn singing,
Stirring the white spray with the same sweet tune;
Fragrant the tansy breathing from the meadows,
As the west wind bends down the long green grass,
Now dark, now golden, as the fleeting shadows
Of the light clouds pass as they went to pass

A long while ago.

There are the roses which we used to gather
To bind a young fair brow, no longer fair;
Ah! thou art mocking us, thou summer weather,
To be so sunny, with the loved one where?
'Tis not her voice—'tis not her step—that lingers
In lone familiar sweetness on the wind;
The bee, the bird, are now the only singers—
Where is the music once with theirs combined

A long while ago?

As the lorn flowers that in her pale hands perish'd,
Is she who only hath a memory here,
She was so much a part of us, so cherish'd,
So young that even love forgot to fear.
Now is her image paramount, it reigneth
With a sad strength that time may not subdue;
And memory a mournful triumph gaineth,
As the slow looks we cast around renew

A long while ago.

Thou lovely garden! where the summer covers
The tree with green leaves and the ground with flowers;
Darkly the past around thy beauty hovers—
The past—the grave of our once happy hours.
It is too sad to gaze upon the seeming
Of nature's changeless loveliness, and feel
That, with the sunshine round, the heart is dreaming
Darkly o'er wounds inflicted, not to heal,

A long while ago.

Ah! visit not the scenes where youth and childhood
Pass'd years that deepen'd as those years went by;
Shadows will darken in the careless wildwood—
There will be tears upon the tranquil sky.
Memories, like phantoms, haunt me while I wander
Beneath the drooping boughs of each old tree:
I grow too sad and mournfully I ponder
Things that are not—and yet that used to be

A long while ago.

Worn out—the heart seems like a ruin'd altar—
Where are the friends, and where the faith of yore?
My eyes grow dim with tears—my footsteps falter—
Thinking of those whom I can love no more.
We change, and others change—while recollection
Would fain renew what it can but recall.
Dark are life's dreams, and weary its affection,
And cold its hopes—and yet I felt them all

A long while ago

AFRICAN ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

On coming out of my hut at Fandah one morning, I saw the king seated at the gate of his palace, surrounded by his great men, administering justice. At a little distance, on the grass, were two men and two women, who were charged with robbery. The evidence had already been gone through, before my arrival. The king was the principal speaker, and when he paused, the whole court murmured approbation. The younger woman made a long defence, and quite astonished me by her volubility, variety of intonation, and graceful action. The appeal, however, seemed to be in vain; for when she had finished, the king, who had listened with great patience, passed sentence in a speech of considerable length, delivered with great fluency and emphasis. In many parts he was much applauded, except by the poor wretches, who heard their doom with shrieks of despair. The king then retired, the court broke up, and the people dispersed. None remained but the prisoners and a decrepit old man, who,

with many threats and some ceremony, administered a small bowl of poison, prepared, I believe, from the leaves of a venerable tree in the neighbourhood, which was hooped and propped all round. The poor creatures received the potion on their knees, and, before they could be induced to swallow it, cast many a lingering look and last farewell on the beautiful world from which a small draught was about to separate them. They afterwards drank a prodigious quantity of water, and when I next went out, the dose had done its deadly work. I cannot tell how far justice was truly administered, but there was a great appearance of it; and I must say that I never, in any court, saw a greater display of decorum and dignity.—*Allen's Views on the Niger.*

SOUNDING THE SEA BY ELECTRO-MAGNETISM.

Electricity is daily extending its sphere of operations, and is becoming more and more extensively applicable to useful purposes. We have this week seen an ingenious apparatus, contrived by Mr Bain, the inventor of the electrical clock, for the purpose of taking soundings at sea by electro-magnetic power. At present, great difficulty exists, when taking soundings in deep water, in ascertaining the exact time the weight strikes the ground. The object of Mr Bain's contrivance is to obviate this difficulty, and he accomplishes it in the following manner:—To the bottom of the hammer of a bell is attached a piece of soft iron, which is placed opposite an electro-magnet; and it is so arranged that when the communication between the coils of wire round the magnet and galvanic battery is completed, the magnet attracts the iron and holds back the hammer. As soon as the connexion is broken, the magnetic power ceases, and the hammer, acted upon by the spring, strikes upon the bell. This part of the apparatus is intended to remain on the deck of the vessel when the soundings are made. The insulated wires from the galvanic battery, properly protected from the action of the water, serve for the cord to which the weight is to be attached. The manner in which the weight is fixed on, so as to complete or break the connexion between the ends of the wires, is extremely simple and ingenious. When the pressure of the weight bears on the hook, the electrical current is uninterrupted, and the magnet keeps the hammer from the bell; but when the weight rests on the ground, the connexion is broken, the attraction of the magnet instantly ceases, and the hammer, being thus liberated, is forced against the bell by the spring. It would thus indicate, with the utmost precision, the moment the weight reaches the bottom of the sea. The apparatus is to be added to the numerous curiosities at the Polytechnic Institution. Its efficacy has been tested in the deep reservoir in which the diving-bell descends. The inventor has been prevented from protecting his property in this invention by the expense of obtaining a patent; but we trust, if his plan be found to succeed in practice, of which we have little doubt, that he will not go unrewarded.—*Inventor's Advocate.*

REMONSTRANCE WITH THE SNAILS.

Ye little snails,
Withalippery tails,
Who noiselessly travel
Along this gravel,
By a silvery path of slime unsightly,
I learn that you visit my pea-rows nightly.
Felonious your visit, I guess!
And I give you this warning,
That, every morning,
I'll strictly examine the pods;
And if one I hit on,
With slaver or spit on,
Your next meal will be with the gods.

I own you're a very ancient race,
And Greece and Babylon were amid;
You have tenanted many a royal dome,
And dwelt in the oldest pyramid;
The source of the Nile!—oh! you have been there!
In the ark was your floodless bed;
On the moonless night of Marathon
You crawl'd o'er the mighty dead;
But still, though I reverence your ancestries,
I don't see why you should nibble my peas.

The meadows are yours—the hedgerow and brook,
You may bathe in their dew at morn;
By the aged sea you may sound your shells,
On the mountains erect your horns;
The fruits and the flowers are your rightful dowers,
Then why—in the name of wonder—
Should my six pea-rows be the only cause
To excite your midnight plunder?

I have never disturb'd your slender shells,
You have hung round my aged walk;
And each might have eat, till he died in his fat,
Beneath his own cabbage-stalk:
But now you must fly from the soil of your sires;
Then put on your liveliest crawl;
And think of your poor little snails at home,
Now orphans or emigrants all,
Utensils domestic, and civil, and social,
I give you an evening to pack up:
But if the moon of this night does not rise on your flight,
To-morrow I'll hang each man Jack up.
You'll think of my peas and your thievish tricks,
With tears of slime, when crossing the Styx.

POSTSCRIPT.

If darkness should not let thee read this,
Furtive snail,
Go ask thy friend the glow-worm,
For his tail.

—From a Scrap-book.

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